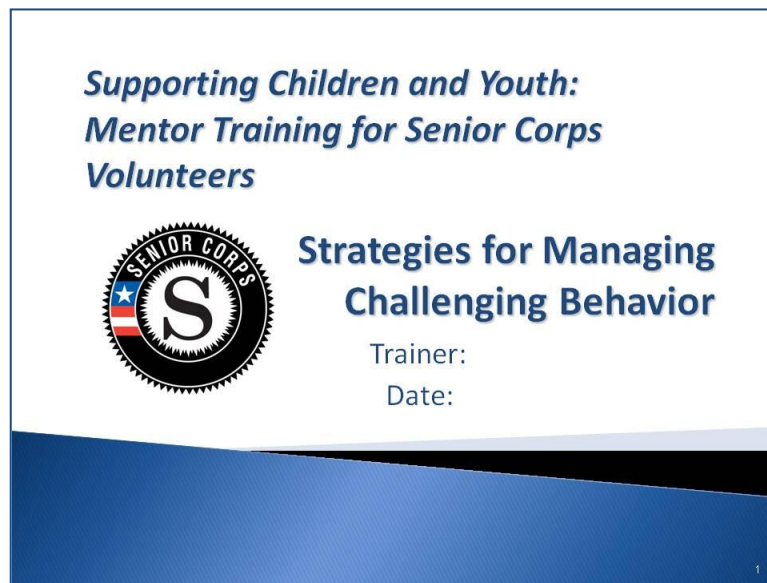


***Supporting Children and Youth:
Mentor Training for Senior Corps Volunteers***

Module 5

**Strategies for Managing Challenging
Behavior**



Module 5. Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior

INTRODUCTION

A common concern among Senior Corps volunteers is how to effectively and appropriately respond to behavior challenges. This workshop provides an overview of behavior, typical developmental age characteristics and some simple strategies for managing challenging behavior.

This workshop includes a brief lecture, a small group exercise, and a short reflection activity. It is recommended that you do a full 2-hour workshop to allow as much time as possible for group discussion.

Remember that you do not need to present this workshop “as is”. Modify the session to fit your participants’ needs and to address the age group(s) they are serving. Omit information that does not apply and/or substitute your own examples to direct the discussion toward issues you want the group to address. For example, if your participants do not work with children outside the school setting, adapt examples where the mentor is with the child/youth in a setting outside the school. If your participants do not work with teens, omit examples that apply to teenagers and highlight those that refer to younger children. Alternatively, if your volunteers work with a wide range of ages, you may want to present this workshop more than once, but focus on a different age group each time.

Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will better understand:

- What influences behavior including the typical age characteristics of children and youth
- Common behavioral challenges that volunteers may encounter
- Preventative approaches and simple strategies to use when responding to common behavioral challenges

Visual Aids (Power Point) and Facilitator’s Notes


If you are using the PowerPoint slides included with this curriculum, Facilitator’s Notes are provided under each slide. These notes provide the same information as the Facilitator’s Notes included in this document, however they are not as detailed.

It is recommended that you use easel paper, a whiteboard, or a chalkboard to note responses to some of the “callout” questions and important points that participants make during the exercise “debrief.” This validates participants’ knowledge and reinforces learning. You may want to write the headings on sheets of easel paper in advance to save time.

This symbol will cue you as to when you might jot down responses:









Handouts

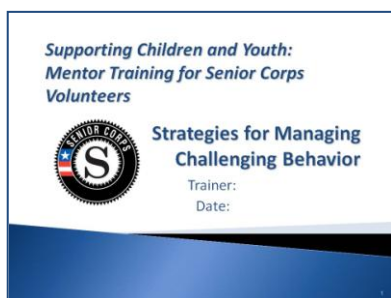
The handouts for this session follow the Facilitator's Notes and Instructions. Handouts 1-3 should be distributed during the session; this symbol in the Facilitator's Notes will cue you as to when: . The remaining handouts can be distributed at the end of the session.

1. Typical Age Characteristics of Children and Youth
2. Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavioral in Children and Youth
3. Exercise Worksheet: Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior
4. Positive Reinforcement Works! (optional)
5. Recommended Resources on Challenging Behaviors (optional)
6. Training Feedback Survey

SESSION AGENDA

Activity	Estimated Time	Method	Slide Numbers
I. Welcome	20 min.		1
A. Learning Objectives	5 min.	Lecture	2
B. Warm-up: Concerns about Behavioral Challenges	10 min.	Large group discussion	3
C. Behavior Basics	5 min.	Lecture	4
II. Age Characteristics of Children and Youth	25 min.	Lecture,	
A. Overview of Age Characteristics	5 min.	Lecture	5
B. Pair Exercise: Age Characteristics  <i>Typical Age Characteristics of Children and Youth</i>	20 min.	Pair exercise, large group debrief	
III. Strategies for Behavioral Challenges	60 min.		
A. Creating a Solid Foundation	5 min.	Lecture	6
B. Responding to Challenges When They Occur  <i>Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavioral in Children and Youth</i>	20 min.	Lecture, large group discussion	7
C. Exercise: Strategies  <i>Exercise Worksheet: Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior</i> (for Option 2 only)	20 min. 15 min.	Small groups of 3-4 Debrief, large group discussion	8 or 9
IV. Reflection: New Ideas	10 min.	Large group discussion	10
V. Closing  <i>Positive Reinforcement Works! (optional)</i>  <i>Recommended Resources on Challenging Behaviors (optional)</i>  <i>Training Feedback Survey</i>	5 min.	Lecture	11

FACILITATOR'S NOTES AND INSTRUCTIONS



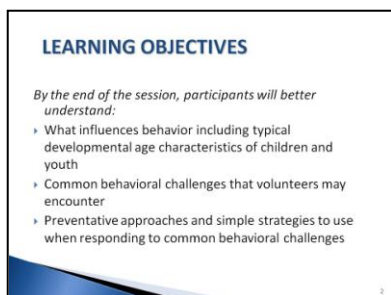
If you are using the PowerPoint slides, have slide 1 up on the screen.

I. Welcome

Welcome participants and introduce the workshop: "You provide ongoing support to children and youth in very important ways. All of us, even experienced volunteers have concerns about how to effectively and appropriately respond to behavior challenges. This workshop provides an overview of behavior, what influences it, like typical developmental age characteristics, and some simple strategies for managing challenging behavior. Sharing your experiences and skills will enrich our learning today."

A. Learning Objectives

Show slide 2.



Describe the learning objectives. By the end of the session, participants will better understand:

- What influences behavior, including the typical age characteristics of children and youth
- Common behavioral challenges that volunteers may encounter
- Preventative approaches and simple strategies to use when responding to common behavioral challenges

Tell participants that there are many things that affect our behavior: our needs, interests, desires, values, strengths, and weaknesses. Behavior is complex and can perplex us. By better understanding children and youth's basic needs and age characteristics, we will be better prepared to understand and work with their behavior.

TIP: Provide realistic information. This module targets volunteers working with children or youth with low and moderate risks. Participants may voice more serious concerns such as evidence of physical or sexual abuse, cutting or other self inflicted injury. Participants working with high-risk youth may mention violent behavior toward others or gang involvement, coming to the sessions with a gun or high on drugs, discussion of sexual encounters or pregnancy or talk of suicide. If your project handles children or youth who may exhibit some of these behaviors, note the concerns raised on a separate sheet and inform the group when they will be discussed. If, however, participants are unlikely to see or need to manage these behaviors, let them know that as well.

B. Warm up: Concerns about Behavioral Challenges

You will need two sheets of easel paper and markers. On one sheet of easel paper, draw a line down the middle and write “Preschool (age 3-5)” on one side and “Elementary School (age 6-11)” on the other. On a second sheet, draw a line down the middle and write “Middle School (age 12-15)” on one side and “High School (age 16-18)” on the other. Only include the age groups you wish to discuss today (e.g. if participants will not be working with ages 16-18, don’t write it on the easel paper).

TIP: Tailor this discussion. Spend more time on the age groups that most participants will be/are serving. For example, if most are working with children in elementary schools, keep the discussion focused on children ages 6-12.



Show side 3.

“Let’s talk about some concerns you might have when working with children and youth.”

CALLOUT: “Take a minute and think about your children, grandchildren or experiences you have had working with children and youth.” Ask for a show of hands: “How many people have experienced a child throwing a tantrum? Or a youth flat out refusing to do what he has been asked to do?”

Ask the group for examples from each age category that you will be discussing today: “What were some other behavior challenges you have encountered? What kinds of challenges worry you?”



Participants may say things like: talking back or using foul language, getting off task, not listening to directions, tantrums, etc. Write down challenges on the easel paper. Validate responses and point out the common themes in the responses.

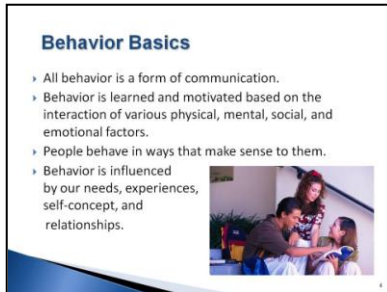
“Keep those concerns in mind. We will talk more about some simple strategies for dealing with these challenging behaviors in a bit.”

TIP: Note the expressed concerns and turn them into an exercise (see “Option 1 Practice” on page 15). One exercise option for later in this module uses the issues participants identify during the “warm-up” as the basis for practice. This allows the “hot” issues to be addressed directly. You will need to be comfortable prepping the easel paper or pulling a participant out to help prepare the paper while the workshop is going.

C. Behavior Basics

“One way to put these behavioral challenges into context is to think about why we behave the way we do.”

Show slide 4.



The following are the basics of behavior.

- All behavior is a form of communication, including problem behavior. For example, a child who doesn't have language skills to express himself may scream when needs aren't being met. A youth who feels unsafe or out of control may act on something she can control, like destroying property.
- Behavior is learned and motivated based on the interaction of various physical, mental, social, and emotional factors. For example, a tired and hungry child may react or over-react to a situation that would not bother him if he were rested and well-fed.
- People behave in ways that make sense to them; that is, ways that worked for them in the past. If a child hits another child to get attention, she does so because this has worked before.
- Behavior is influenced by many things: our needs, experiences, self-concept, and relationship with peers and adults. Behavior is also influenced by our home lives (especially for children) our environment (neighborhood, school) and some disabilities.

“What else influences behavior? The age characteristics—physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development—also help determine behavior. That is, what children and youth are able to do with their bodies, how they get along in the world, how they feel, and what they are thinking also influence behavior.”

II. Age Characteristics of Children and Youth

A. Overview of Age Characteristics

Tell participants: “Many of us have worries about working with children and youth, based on our experience or stories we have heard. Understanding more about typical age development will help you prepare for behavioral challenges you may come across, and plan how to best respond to them.”

Explain that age characteristics can be thought of in terms of physical, social/emotional, and cognitive characteristics:

- **Physical** characteristics are related to changes in the body as the child/youth grows, such as the amount of energy and rest needed, development of coordination and motor skills, and puberty.
- **Social/emotional** characteristics are related to social skills, self esteem, a sense of belonging, and ability to regulate emotions.
- **Cognitive** characteristics are related to thinking and reasoning, things like verbal expression, conflict resolution, and problem solving.

“All children are unique and develop at their own pace, but let’s talk in terms of general age characteristics. Think about the children/youth you know or have worked with.”

Age	Physical	Social/ Emotional	Cognitive
3-5	Developing motor skills, high energy	Learning to cooperate	Building language
6-8	High energy	Enjoys same-gender peer groups	Becoming more self-directed
9-11	Mastering specific skills	Becoming self-conscious	More sophisticated humor
12-14	Beginning puberty	Asserting independence	Can organize and plan ahead
15-18	Completing puberty	Sense of personal moral code	Developed abstract thought

Show slide 5. Review the examples of some of the characteristics associated with different ages.

TIP: Customize the pair exercise in the next section to fit your priorities. Spend more time on the age groups that most participants will be/are serving. For example, if most are working with preteen and adolescent youth, omit the discussion about children under age 9. Alternatively, if participants work with all/several ages, you may want to divide participants by age group they work with, and have them identify characteristics for children within that age group.

B. Pair Exercise: Age Characteristics

Facilitator: For this short exercise, you will need a few sheets of easel paper, one for each age group you would like the group to discuss, and a marker. Write the selected age groups (e.g. “3-5”, “6-8”, “9-11”, “12-14”, “15-18”) at the top of each sheet, one per sheet. Underneath the age group, make three columns and name them “Physical”, “Social/Emotional”, and “Cognitive” (see the example below). Participants will need scratch paper and pens.

Example

<u>Ages 6-8 Characteristics</u>		
Physical	Social/ Emotional	Cognitive

For each age group you would like to discuss (limit it to two age groups if possible), ask participants to work with the person next to them (e.g. “every other person, turn to your left and get a partner to work with”).

CALLOUT: “What would you say are some other characteristics of children/youth in this age group?” Invite them to try to get at least one characteristic for each of the three categories (physical, social/emotional, and cognitive) and to note their responses on a piece of paper.




After 5 minutes, ask some of the pairs to tell you what they wrote down for the age groups identified. Jot down pairs’ responses on the easel paper under the correct category (see example). Ask if there are any new additions the large group wants to add.

Example

<u>Ages 6-8 Characteristics</u>		
Physical	Social/ Emotional	Cognitive
<i>High energy – get them outside!</i>	<i>Likes to talk – put to use active listening skills</i>	<i>Enjoys collecting things-look for interesting things together (rocks, stamps)</i>

CALLOUT: “If you haven’t already done so, think about how these characteristics will influence how you relate to this group”. Give them another minute to consider the question and comment.

 Distribute the handout *Typical Age Characteristics of Children and Youth* to each participant. You may want to refer to it to fill in any gaps from the discussion

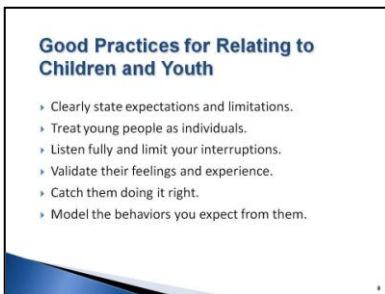
TIP: Use this opportunity to improve understanding of age group(s). Although you will be asking participants to describe “typical” youth age characteristics, many will often respond with extreme responses due to their biggest worries or concerns. Use this discussion to help participants better understand the populations that you serve, and dispel myths that come up (e.g., teenagers don’t ever like it when adults ask questions about their lives).

III. Strategies for Behavioral Challenges

A. Creating a Solid Foundation

Tell participants: “Now, let’s look at some of the components of building a relationship. It will be easier to respond to challenging behavioral situations if we can first create a foundation of trust and respect with the child or youth. Ideally, you want to spend less time managing behavior and more time celebrating success.”

Show slide 6.



Before we get to specific strategies, let’s remind ourselves of some good practices for interacting with children and youth that allow you to build trust and friendship, and show them that they are valued, supported and respected. These practices won’t stop all challenging behavior but they can help prevent some of it.

Clearly state expectations and limits

- The first few meetings with the child are the time to set clear and consistent boundaries as a part of creating a strong relationship. It may feel like you are walking a fine line of setting limits while also building trust.
- Like all relationships, developing successful child-adult partnerships takes time. And it may take more time if the child/youth has had adults abandon or hurt them in the past.
- It may seem strange, but clearly identifying boundaries can help children and youth to feel safer.

Treat children and youth as individuals

- Get to know them and don’t presume they are all alike.
- Don’t make assumptions based on appearance age, economic status or other characteristics.
- Be careful of judgments that are based on stereotypes.

Listen fully and limit your interruptions.

- Use body language (eye contact, facial expressions) to show you are interested and listening.
- Ask clarifying questions but limit input unless it is requested.

Validate their feelings and experience

This does not mean approval or agreement, but it shows you understand. For example, “I understand what you are saying. You feel angry because your friend was gossiping about you...”

Catch them doing it right

- By pointing out what they are ‘doing right’, you will reinforce the behavior that you want to see.
- Be specific. For example, “That was very kind of you to help Melissa just now. You saw she was upset and you offered her a hug and tissues. That’s a great way to show her that you are her friend.”

Model the behavior you expect

Children and youth are picking up behavioral cues from you all the time; model the behaviors you expect from them. For example:

- Apologize when you make a mistake.
- Be respectful and ask for respect in return.

TIP: Panel of experienced volunteers or professionals. New volunteers are always anxious to hear real life situations. Consider putting together a panel of 2-4 successful volunteers who are willing to share their mistakes and how they handled difficult behaviors. One suggestion is to have the participants put a question down on an index card and collect those for the volunteers to address. While one volunteer responds, the other volunteers can offer their perspectives. Another volunteer can be considering the next question.

B. Responding to Challenges When They Occur

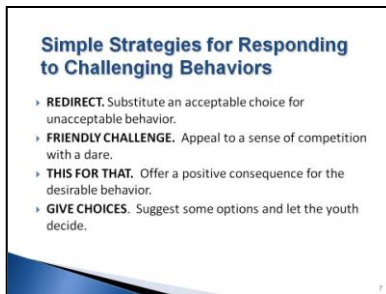
Tell participants that despite our best efforts, challenging behavioral situations arise.

“No one can provide you with a formula that will work for every child and youth in every situation. However, if you can view acting-out, irresponsible or negative behavior as a *message*—even if it is in an unpleasant form—for what the child/youth really needs, you will be better able to match a strategy, or idea, for the challenging situation.” (For example, a youth that throws his books across the room may be frustrated and need access to more resources such as tutoring or counseling.)

So, let’s say some challenging behavior happens, what do you do first?

- Take a big calming breathe. If the child/youth is open to it, they may need to do the same.
- Don’t be afraid to pause for a moment and think.
- Sometimes stating the obvious in a calm way can help the child see what the behavior looks like. “I see you just cut off your bangs.” Then wait.

Show slide 7.



“Let’s look at a few examples of common strategies (ideas) for dealing with challenging behavior.”

Redirect

- Substitute an acceptable choice for unacceptable behavior. “Redirect” the child/youth to a different activity or environment.
- Example: A 5 year old is banging out a drum solo with his pencil on the desk. You don’t want to discourage his budding musical talent but you do need him to quiet down, so you give him a rubber “stress ball” to fidget with or invite him to stand and stretch with you.

Observe and Clarify

- Provide your observation in a nonjudgmental way and ask for clarification or suggestions. Then, stop talking and listen.
- Example: An 11 year old who throws things around when angry. After he cools down, you might say, “I noticed that when you are angry, you throw things. You seem to like throwing things. Is that true? What else could you do? If throwing things helps, what other item might you throw that wouldn’t do any damage?” (e.g. sponge ball into a trash can)

This for That

- Offer a positive consequence for a desirable behavior.
- Example: An 8 year old is known to “forget” to bring his math homework for you to look over. You say: “If you remember to bring your homework on Tuesday, then I’ll have time to correct it and we’ll have time to work on the knitting project you were interested in seeing.”

Give Choices

- Suggest some options and let the child/youth decide.
- Example: A 13 year old tells you that she plans a fight with a classmate for disrespecting her in front of a whole group of kids. You suspect she told you because she doesn’t really want to fight, but she doesn’t know how to back down and save face. You tell her: “Let’s think over some alternatives. I can go with you right now to talk to the Peer Mediation Counselor about setting up a meeting between you and (the classmate), or you can go talk to them yourself, or we can talk with my supervisor and see if she has any suggestions. Which one will work for you?”

TIP: Customize the list of common strategies. The four strategies listed above are from a larger list of strategies in the handout, *Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavioral in Children and Youth*. Depending on the age group your volunteers serve or the challenges they are facing, you will want to check out the list and identify the strategies that best fit their assignments.

For each of the strategies, ask participants for another example for the age groups you are discussing today. For example,

CALLOUT: “When might you use the ‘redirect’ strategy with 6-8 years olds? Can you give me an example of a situation? What would you say to the child? What about 12-14 year olds? ”

If participants are stumped, provide your own examples, or use the examples provided below.

Additional Examples (if needed)

Redirect

A 13 year old has discovered a “special website for adults” and shyly tells you about it. You realize she has questions about sex that no one has been answering. Inwardly, you are panicking, but outwardly, you calmly say, “Maya, I bet during your free period, Mrs. Jones, the health teacher, would be happy to talk to you about this. Why don’t we go over there this afternoon?”

Observe and Clarify


An 8 year old is not interested in studying for her spelling test. You say, “I notice that you aren’t very motivated to study today. Sometimes when I am worried I can’t do something, I just don’t feel very interested. I’m wondering if that is what is happening for you with the spelling words. What do you think we need to do?”

This for That

A 3 year old stomps away and does not want to join story time at the library because another child’s book was chosen this time. You say, “We can stay at the library if we are able to sit in the circle. Would you like to turn the pages? Otherwise, we will be asked to leave. Shall we sit together?” If she chooses not to sit in the circle, be ready to leave!

Give Choices

You are helping a 16 year old study for a test, but he is complaining loudly and nonstop. He will fail this subject if he doesn’t bring up his scores. You offer: “We can take a short break and come back to this today, or we can put it aside and finish it on Thursday during your free period and do something else now. Which do you prefer?”

 After considering the four strategies, note that *Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavioral in Children and Youth* has over a dozen more and pass out the document. Give participants a minute or two to look at pages 2-3 before introducing one of the two exercise options.

“Let’s look at some other examples for practice.”

TIP: Modify the “Strategies” handout to include program policy reminders, if needed. Review the handout prior to the workshop. You may want to modify it to include policy reminders (or distribute a separate reminder sheet). Alternatively, you could refer to the policy sections of the program/station handbook when you discuss appropriate and inappropriate responses to behavior challenges.

C. Exercise: Strategies

The purpose of this exercise is to help participants practice strategies that address the challenging situations they may encounter.

Note: There two exercise options to consider which will meet the goal. You will only want to do one.

1. In the first option, you would use the issues/concerns generated by the group during the earlier “warm-up” discussion. One concern/issue would be posted per piece of easel paper; 4-6 would be posted around the room. This would require some quick decision-making about which of the issues generated earlier would be used and transferred to individual easel paper during the workshop. See Option 1 for instructions for this exercise.
2. The second option uses the exercise handout, *Exercise Worksheet: Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior*, and a small group format. Prior to the workshop, you will want to decide if any alterations need to be made to the worksheet. See Option 2 for instructions for this exercise.

Option 1 (using group generated issues)

FOR OPTION 1, YOU WILL NEED: Post 4-6 sheets of easel paper around the room; each one with a single challenging behavior identified by the group during the “warm-up” discussion (see example below). Ideally the 4-6 issues represent common or “hot” behavior concerns that the volunteers might encounter. Make sure you have at least two markers per easel paper.

**Example**

Use of foul language	
Strategy	I would say...

Exercise: Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior**Instructions:**

1. Go over to one of the issues of your choice. (Bring the “Strategies...” handout with you for help.)
2. When a few of you have gathered at the issue:
 - › Take 5 minutes to come up with 2-3 strategies.
 - › One person write down the group’s ideas for what you could say in that situation for each strategy.
3. When the facilitator calls “time”, move to another issue and repeat with the next group.

Show slide 8.

OPTION 1 INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read each of the issues posted around the room to the group.
2. With their *Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavioral in Children and Youth* handout, ask participants to move to a posted behavior issue of their choice.
3. When the group that has gathered by the issue, they should choose a recorder who can bullet out the responses.
4. In 5 minutes, each group should:
 - a. Come up with 2-3 strategies they might try.
 - b. State specifically what they might say to the child/youth. Come up with as many statements as possible and the age group to which they pertain (see example below).
5. After 5 minutes, have the participants find another issue. Repeat instruction #3 and #4. The recorder will add to the previous group’s notes or use a blank sheet of easel paper.
6. Repeat the process a third time, if time allows.
7. After the last round, have the participant return to their seats for the “debrief”.

Example

Use of foul language	
Strategy	I would say...
State and Detach	“Remember the rules. Swearing isn’t allowed in here because many people find it offensive. If you continue to use that language, we will be asked to leave.” (Ages 12-18)

OPTION 1 DEBRIEF

For each of the posted issues:

1. Ask a participant to read the responses for each of the posted issues; the strategies suggested and the specific statements formulated.
2. Ask the group: "For the groups that worked on this issue, is there anything you want to clarify? For those of you that did not, are there other strategies you might try or ways you might have approached this?" Note new thoughts on easel paper.
3. "Is there anything you might need to consider before using this strategy? What might change depending on the age group?" Validate appropriate suggestions. If any suggestions are inappropriate, clarify and explain why.
4. "Can anyone see another way to handle that?"




Use this discussion to help participants share other strategies that they have used that they found helpful with the children and youth. The discussion can also be an opportunity to discuss specific limits or boundaries for volunteers (e.g., limits of physical contact with youth, such as hugging or holding their hands).

TIP: Alternative to standing. If standing and moving around to do the exercise is too taxing, put the easel pads on different tables and the participants can move to the table of their choice and sit down. If mobility is a problem, you could also move the written challenges on easel paper to different tables.

Option 2 (using exercise handout)

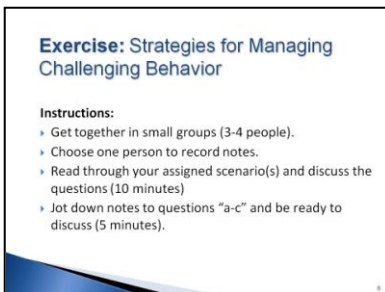
Determine whether you want the participants to work on behavior strategies for children under age 12, or youth age 12 and over, or both age groups.

FOR OPTION 2, YOU WILL NEED: Copies of the handout, 
Exercise Worksheet: Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior. The worksheet handout can be divided into two sections:

- Pages 1-3 include five scenarios involving children under age 12;
- Pages 3-4 describe three situations with youth ages 12 and over.

TIP: Customize the exercise. If there are particular behavior management situations you want to discuss, modify the scenarios in *Exercise Worksheet: Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior* to include those situations. Omit any situations that you feel are not appropriate or necessary to discuss.

Show slide 9.



Exercise: Strategies for Managing Challenging Behavior

Instructions:

- › Get together in small groups (3-4 people).
- › Choose one person to record notes.
- › Read through your assigned scenario(s) and discuss the questions (10 minutes)
- › Jot down notes to questions "a-c" and be ready to discuss (5 minutes).

OPTION 2 INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ask participants to get into groups of 3-4. Each group should identify a recorder to take notes.
2. Assign each group one or two situations from the worksheet to work on.
3. Ask the small groups to take 15 minutes to discuss the situations and jot down some notes.
4. After 15 minutes, bring the group back together to report their ideas to the large group.

OPTION 2 DEBRIEF

For each of the situations you assigned from the worksheet:

1. Ask the group(s) assigned to share what they wrote down:
 - a. “How did you use the suggested strategy to address the behavior, including what specifically you would say to the child/youth?” (If the group is stuck, see suggestions in the Facilitator Notes on page 21-24.)
 - b. “What other strategies might you try?”
 - c. “Is there anything you might need to consider before using this strategy?”
2. Ask the larger group if they have anything to add and use the easel paper to write down the main ideas.
3. “Is there anything you might need to consider before using this strategy?” Validate appropriate suggestions. If any suggestions are inappropriate, clarify and explain why.
4. “Can anyone see another way to handle that?”

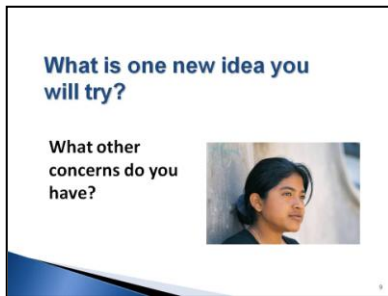


Use this discussion to help participants think about other strategies that they have used that are helpful with the children and youth that you serve. The discussion can also be an opportunity to discuss specific limits or boundaries for volunteers (e.g., limits of physical contact with youth, such as hugging or holding their hands).

TIP: Remind participants to stay positive. As you talk about managing challenging behavior, emphasize the importance of using positive responses and language. See Module 2 of this series, “Becoming an Effective Mentor”, for an exercise on how mentors can frame their responses to encourage positive youth development.

IV. Reflection: New Ideas

Show slide 10.



Look at the behavior challenges that participants said had worried them at the beginning of the workshop (“warm-up”). Have they all been addressed? If not, ask participants for ideas about how to respond in the situation(s). If the group is unsure how to respond, offer suggestions. If you are unsure how to respond, let them know that you will ask for advice from station staff and get back to them. Remind participants that they will always have a supervisor they can consult during their assignments.

CALLOUT: “What is one new idea you learned today that you will try?” Validate or clarify suggestions.

TIP: Point out how participants have supported each other during this workshop. The workshop should provide a safe space to discuss difficult situations and get ideas and support from peers. Participants may be surprised that others have experienced the same challenges.


V. Closing

Show slide 11.




Tell participants that their patience and support can help children and youth learn positive ways to communicate their needs, and reduce challenging behavior. When children/youth feel heard and respected, and their needs are met, there is no reason to use challenging behavior. Whereas punishment can send the message that anger is the way to solve a problem, an adult who teaches and models positive ways to express needs and feelings is helping that child learn important social and problem-solving skills.

Research shows that for children and youth, having a significant caring adult in their life is a major contributor to their ability to succeed. Remind participants that regardless of the service they provide, children and youth will benefit from their love and attention, and this is the special contribution that senior volunteers make.

 (Optional) Distribute the two remaining handouts:

- *Positive Reinforcement Works!*
- *Recommended Resources on Challenging Behaviors*

TIP: Customize the handouts or add your own. You may want to adapt the handouts to add your own tips and recommendations, or focus the tips and resources to address a specific age group that most of your participants are serving. You might also find information you would like to print out and distribute from the websites in the handout, *Recommended Resources on Challenging Behaviors*.

 Last, ask participants to complete a *Training Feedback Survey* to help you improve the next workshop.

Ask participants if there are any more questions or last words before you close. Make any final announcements and thank participants for attending the presentation.

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR EXERCISE DEBRIEF (Option 2)

The following are a few sample responses to offer during the exercise debrief if the group gets stuck.

CHILDREN UNDER AGE 12

1. Sam. You are having lunch in the school cafeteria with Sam (6 years old), but he has a hard time sitting still. Now he has gone under the table to “look for gum”.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: REDIRECT. Substitute acceptable choice for unacceptable behavior.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Sam.

“Hey Sam, I need your help up here. Can you take this to the garbage can?”

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Sam?

This for that

c. If yes, what specifically will you say?

“Sam, if you can sit here for two more minutes, we can go to the playground.”

2. Kayla. You are helping Kayla (10 years old) with a school project, due tomorrow. She is having a hard time staying “on task” and keeps getting up and walking away even though you keep trying to bring her back.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: FRIENDLY CHALLENGE. Appeal to a sense of competition with a dare.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Kayla.

“Kayla, let’s see if you can stay in your seat and focused on those 3 math problems for 5 minutes. I am going to time you. Ready? Go!”

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Kayla?

Observe and Clarify

c. If yes, what specifically will you say?

“Hey, I notice that you are having a hard time focusing on your school project. What do you think is going on? What kind of help do you need?”

3. Demarco. Demarco (8 years old) doesn't want to get off the computer when his time is up. He is totally involved in a game he is playing, but other kids are waiting to use the computer.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: THIS FOR THAT. Offer a positive consequence for the desirable behavior.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Demarco.

"Demarco, if you get off of the computer now I can play a game with you before you go home."

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Demarco?

Natural Consequences

c. If yes, what specifically will you say?

"Demarco, let John use the computer now and you can sign up for time for tomorrow. Remember the rules. If you choose to stay on the computer, you will lose your computer privilege for the rest of the week."

4. Madison. You are supposed to help Madison (9 years old) practice her reading for 20 minutes today. She finds all kinds of reasons to stall until the 20 minutes are nearly up.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: GIVE CHOICES. Suggest some acceptable options and let the child decide.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Madison.

"Madison, you have the choice to practice your reading now and then you will have free time or you can choose to work during your free time. Which would you like?"

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Madison?

Friendly challenge

c. If yes, what specifically will you say?

"Madison, let's see how many pages you can read in 20 minutes. What do you think? Up for the challenge?"

5. Zak. Zak (4 years old) has a hard time with transitions. He gets involved in an activity and gets very upset when he is told it is time to stop.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: THIS FOR THAT. Offer a positive consequence for the desirable behavior.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Zak.

"Zak, if you put away your toy right now then you can be the first in line."

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Zak?

Using a secret code

c. If yes, what specifically will you say?

Give Zak the secret code (such as blinking the lights) 1 minute before it is time to clean up. Be sure to reinforce this when it is followed up with.

YOUTH AGE 12 AND UP

1. Brandon. Brandon (12 years old) is a youth you mentor and you meet twice week. You are trying to develop a relationship with him but he is constantly “texting” and checking his phone during your time together.

Strategy (Idea) Suggestion: GIVE CHOICES. Suggest some options and let the youth decide.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Brandon.

“Brandon, you can either leave your phone in the car, I can hold it for you, or you can turn it off and put it in your backpack. What works for you?”

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Brandon?

State the expectations and detach

c. If yes, what specifically will you say?

“Brandon, texting and checking your phone is not allowed during our time. Please put your phone away. If you choose to continue taking out your phone, I will need to ask you to leave it at home next time.”

2. Maya. Maya (16 years old) is a youth you mentor and she is supposed to meet with you for at least one hour a week. She often shows up late, cutting into your time together, and sometimes she doesn’t show up at all.

Strategy Suggestion: STATE AND DETACH. State your expectations, stay out of any arguments, restate expectations, and then disengage.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to Maya.

“Maya, it is important for you to be on time for our meetings. If you show up more than 10 minutes late, I will need to cancel our session.”

b. Is there another strategy you might try with Maya?

Observe and clarify

c. If yes, what specifically will you say?

“Maya, I notice that you are often late or missing for our sessions. I know you remember that we both made the commitment to be on time for our meetings. What do you think is interfering with this commitment? What can we do?”

3. LaTonya. LaTonya (14 years old) is usually in a good mood when you meet but today she comes in angry. When you ask what is wrong, she starts swearing at you.

Strategy Suggestion: OBSERVE AND CLARIFY. Provide an observation in a nonjudgmental way and ask for clarification or suggestions.

a. Describe how you might handle this situation using the suggested strategy. State specifically what you will say to LaTonya.

“LaTonya, it is clear to me that you are really upset. Can you help me understand what is happening to you today?” Later, after LaTonya has calmed down, you might remind her about the agreement not to swear and together explore other options for managing anger.

b. Is there another strategy you might try with LaTonya?

Give choices

c. If yes, what specifically will you say?

“LaTonya, I can see that you are clearly upset, however, swearing at me is not appropriate. You can either tell me what you are upset about without swearing or you can go and take two minutes to cool down and then come back. What works better for you?”

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